

WAC Committee Survey Responses

32 surveys sent out, 23 surveys returned and tabulated.

1. Does your department have written program outcomes that require majors to demonstrate what is recognized as effective writing in your discipline? Yes: **18** No: **5**

If yes, where do these outcomes appear? (check all that apply)

- a. faculty syllabi: **11**
- b. department web-page: **10**
- c. program requirement descriptions: **7**
- d. other

Please indicate:

Department brochure (**Dance**)

We have department-wide assessments for our specialty program area accreditation that includes written articles. (**ELEC**)

On specific assignments that require writing skills (**CHES**)

Assessment Outcomes (**Music**)

2. Does your department have written course outcomes that require majors to demonstrate what is recognized as effective writing in your discipline? Yes: **18** No: **3**

IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTIONS 1 AND 2, PLEASE SKIP TO ITEM #7.

If yes, where do these outcomes appear? (check all that apply)

- a. faculty syllabi: **20**
- b. department web-page: **5**
- c. other

Please indicate:

Also for the ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT and POET PRESENTATION given to all student teachers. (**ELEC**)

On specific assignments that require demonstration of writing skills (**CHES**)

On projects. (**Health & Safety**)

Separate documents on "mini capstone" research projects in civilization and literature classes (rubrics, setup, etc.). (**MODL**)

3. How does your department assess your majors' ability to meet the outcomes for writing established by your department?

- a. student success in courses throughout the major: **10**
- b. student success in a course that is deliberately writing intensive: **10**
- c. exit exam: **2**
- d. exit portfolio: **6**
- e. other

Please indicate:

Student survey and internship appraisal. We designate oral/written comments as outcome of particular courses in each major. (**CPSC**)

Exit project; course-based project (**ELEC**)

We have consulted with the English department and are in the process of establishing a dept rubric that would be used in several classes. They have been very helpful. (**Exercise & Rehab Sci**)

Capstone Course (**GG&E**)

Capstone research project for BSED (**MODL**)

Success on specific assignments (**PT**)

Capstone Course (**Political Sci**)

4. Are you satisfied with how well your majors are achieving articulated writing outcomes?

Yes: **9** No: **8**

5. Have your faculty made any changes in the curriculum based on the assessment of how well majors are achieving stated writing outcomes? Yes: **8** No: **8**

If yes, please explain briefly.

We added writing requirements to courses so that each student would write a minimum of 3 papers in the discipline. We have added documentation requirements to one course. The faculty would prefer to have a technical writing requirement for our majors instead of English 103. Accrediting body requires written comments. We focus on program documentation, system doc., and research paper. We've added rubrics for the key courses described above. (**CPSC**)

We tried having all dance majors in a particular college writing II course, hoping this would make a difference. I do not think that it has, and the English department chair has asked us not to do this in the future. (**Dance**)

Provide more explicit support and training for the action research project and have embedded assignments in previous course work to prepare students for success in this capstone project. (**ELEC**)

Not curriculum per se but we have classes that are writing intensive. (**Exercise & Rehab Sci.**)

I run help sessions for those who are interested with “intensive” help on developing good writing skills. I showed students how to write succinct papers yet meet criteria. I see too many students ramble on and on. They need help constructing concise yet correct papers! (CHES)

History as a discipline requires a great deal of writing in our classes. (History)

We are starting writing instructions and “mini capstone” essays at the 200 level, and students then must do another, longer research paper as part of a 300 or 400 level literature or civilization class. Since 1 civilization and 2 literature courses are required for all majors, graduating students will have completed at least 4 “practice” capstone projects before taking on the final Capstone Project. (MODL)

Our accreditation assessment team was here two weeks ago and they provided suggestions to measure how well our students are meeting our expectations. (Sports Mgt)

Changes were made in the writing assignments in the theatre’s writing intensive courses Survey of Dramatic Literature I and Survey of Dramatic Literature II. These changes were implemented with the arrival of our new Theatre History professor in the fall semester of this last year. (Theatre)

6. Have your faculty made any changes in pedagogy based on the assessment of how well your majors are achieving stated writing outcomes? Yes: 11 No: 7

If yes, please explain briefly.

We have created samples of rubrics for assessing students’ technical writing abilities. Students receive these rubrics and the expectations are discussed. Previous to our assessments, we assumed students would know the expectations as a result of English 101 and 103. Again the designated courses are addressing written comments. It is a major focus of the key courses. (CPSC)

We require that students utilize the writing center for all writing assignments. (Dance)

English department faculty are continually adjusting their pedagogy to produce better results in students’ written work. Sometimes, they build in extra review of specific writing principles; sometimes they provide opportunities for instructor feedback before accepting a final draft; sometimes they structure the opportunity for peer feedback in the process of generating a draft. (English)

I run help sessions for those who are interested with “intensive” help on developing good writing skills. I used to have Ross Feltz from Public Relations come to help students with writing for an appropriate audience. I have not continued that exercise since Ross left, but would love to reinstate such an assignment. It was helpful to have someone who “writes” for a living critique student writing and help students master writing skills. (CHES)

Changes in format of capstone course to increase editing opportunities. (GG&E)

Help sessions (Health & Safety)

We have modified, in many cases, requirements in classes as the result of student responses and our own observations. (History)

We have begun to incorporate specific rubrics with our writing assignments and more detailed instructions for their completion. (MODL)

Some of us have increased our writing requirements, used better assignments, etc. (**Political Sci**)

We use rubrics more. (**Secondary Education**)

We have our majors attend an APA writing workshop each fall. Plus the faculty give written feedback on each writing assignment. (**Sports Mgt**)

7. The university's writing-across-the-curriculum committee is interested in helping departments develop the writing abilities of their majors. Please indicate the areas in which your faculty would welcome assistance:

- a. Identifying writing abilities important to your discipline: **4**
- b. Articulating writing outcomes for major programs and courses: **7**
- c. Designing rubrics for assessing whether students meet desired outcomes: **9**
- d. Integrating "writing to learn" activities into classes: **3**
- e. Integrating "writing as disciplinary practice" activities into classes: **3**
- f. Assigning writing activities that won't increase instructor workloads: **8**
- g. Responding to student writing in ways that will lead to improvement: **9**
- h. Establishing an electronic Writing Resource Center: **7**
- i. Other

Please indicate:

I need students to understand the importance of these skills. Potential employers ask about writing skills. I have to say some students don't understand that a sentence must contain a noun and verb! They do not grasp the importance/discipline of drafts and revisions. Too many students are ok with handing in "any old thing" – ignoring criteria and directions. Then they complain when they get low scores! (**CHES**)

We would absolutely welcome any help in doing this because we are not experts in writing but would like to assist our students. We would like our students to be able to "write better". (**Exercise & Rehab Sci.**)

8. The WAC Committee welcomes comments below about how we might better assist you in meeting the instructional needs regarding writing in your department.

Should we be concerned with major and LS courses, or just the former? (**Biology**)

It would be helpful for us if the writing center would read and revise for grammar, rather than for content. I know there are different opinions about the way a writing center should be run, but our students need help with grammatical errors more than help with content, which the professor in the major area should oversee. (**Dance**)

Unfortunately the underlying message of elimination of "intensive writing" courses is the writing is not important. It is! Now faculty could use help with assessing a writing assignment that does not overwhelm them when they are grading assignments. As class size increases, writing should not decrease. (**CHES**)

Committee should work with College Writing I & II instructors. Students seem unprepared. (**Health & Safety**)

Requiring a good deal of writing and proving meaningful responses to students is one of the special contributions History makes to SRU. (History)

All our students are in the DPT program and the only “writing” objectives we have are related to patient care/documentation, etc. There are no intensive writing expectations. (PT)